INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE ALASKAN REGION CORPORATE MAINTENANCE PHILOSOPHY PILOT PROGRAM

NAS Configuration Management and Evaluation Staff
Program Evaluation Branch (ACM-10)

Report #2001-16

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of the Alaska Region Airway Facilities (AF) Corporate Maintenance Philosophy (CMP) was to become the Provider of Choice for maintenance of the National Airspace System (NAS) by creating a maintenance concept that is very customer oriented and provides quality service at a competitive cost. The impetus for CMP was to increase facility performance and reduce costs since the Alaskan Region (AAL) historically under-performed in these areas when compared to other Regional Airway Facilities Divisions. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Professional Airways System Specialists (PASS) union agreed to pilot CMP in Alaska for three years (March 1997 - March 2000) per a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed March 11, 1997. The MOU specifically stated that "should the Parties wish to make permanent any initiative utilized in the Pilot, it will be by mutual consent of the Parties, and after the appropriate bargaining." The Alaskan Region made immediate changes to their maintenance program including waivers to national standards to streamline processes, staff reductions through natural attrition, cost and resource reductions, innovative teaming approaches, training, award systems, and other provisions such as facility capital investments and continuous improvements. After the three year test period, the pilot was unilaterally extended by the FAA which subsequently led to grievances and an Unfair Labor Practice filed by PASS. Management and union arbitration resulted in a Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) ruling that required the FAA to revert back to conditions prior to the pilot effort. The implications of this ruling would potentially require the FAA to cover the additional costs of hiring personnel back to pre-pilot staffing levels and the costs to relocate employees that were moved during the pilot program.

On March 8, 2001, as a result of the FLRA ruling, the FAA, PASS, and National Air Traffic Controllers Association-Engineers union (NATCA-E) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to address labor/employee relations, maintenance programs, and staffing. The MOA also required that an organizational assessment of the CMP pilot program be conducted by June 1, 2001. The Director of the Airway Facilities Service (AAF-1) held a teleconference with the Manager of the NAS Configuration Management & Evaluation Staff (ACM-1) on March 22, 2001 and requested that the Program Evaluation Branch (ACM-10), take a leadership role in conducting this assessment with support from Air Traffic (AT) and the Logistics Center. An ACM led assessment was viewed as unbiased by Airway Facilities (AF) management and union leadership since the ACM organization is not a part of the AF organizational structure.

The objective of the assessment was to determine employee and management experiences with the CMP pilot program relative to staffing, employee and labor relations, management oversight, and maintenance policies and procedures. The assessment was based purely on the perceptions of the AF workforce and its customers within the Alaskan Region but was not intended to be balanced with more objective data collection in areas such as system performance, financial management, or human resource management.

In order to maximize the opportunities for all AF employees in the Alaskan Region to express

their opinions on the CMP pilot program while ensuring that a representative cross section of views and perceptions in the Alaskan Region were reflected, the following data collection methods were employed:

- Survey Questionnaire (distributed to the entire AF workforce in AAL)
- Focus Groups (representative random sample from each major AF organizational unit in AAL)
- Customer Interviews (managers of major AT facilities, National Airspace System Implementation Program - ANI, and Alaska Airlines)
- Employee Interviews (self-selected)
- Listening Sessions (self-selected)

Summary of Findings

The assessment findings incorporate commonly identified themes among the various groups and data collection methods used in the assessment and represent the assessment team's interpretation of the data collected in the survey, focus groups, and interviews. The following are the assessment findings, which for the most part represent essential issues that must be addressed in order to rebuild the trust and improve the effectiveness and performance of the Alaskan Region's AF organization:

- Staffing levels were too low.
- There was severe degradation of communication and trust in the Alaskan Region's AF work environment.
- CMP implementation was poor.
- Inconsistent support from AAF-1 and FAA Headquarters contributed to the difficulties Alaskan Region encountered during the CMP pilot program.
- The adversarial relationship between management and labor must change.

The CMP pilot program did have some positive aspects including the Modified System Maintenance Schedule (MSMS) concept, the Airway Facilities Training Team (AFTT), CMP reinvestments, and the awards program. Coupled with these findings, the following conclusions represent the assessment team's interpretations of significant contributing factors that impacted events and decisions during the CMP pilot:

- The AF Regional Division Manager in Alaska had a sincere desire to improve the region's performance in response to the National Performance Review initiatives.
- PASS partnership was strong in the 1996-1997 timeframe. If any major changes were going to be implemented, that was the time to try.
- It appeared as if AF leadership in the Alaskan Region took the path of least resistance as it implemented the CMP pilot program. The propensity towards bypassing potential roadblocks rather than confronting them head-on may have significantly undermined the effectiveness of the CMP pilot program.
- Limiting CMP to a three year pilot was the only way to make it palatable to both AAF-1 and PASS national leadership and allow for its immediate adoption and implementation.

- AF leadership in Alaska noted that they limited AT involvement in initial CMP planning because AT was perceived to be a roadblock to CMP implementation.
- Many of the AF employees in Alaska believe that CMP, and the MSMS in particular, were implemented too quickly. It appears as if management wanted to put MSMS in place right away, prove the concept quickly, and make the case for national adoption.
- System Service Center (SSC) employees believe that management was not interested in hearing negative feedback on MSMS or CMP as a whole.
- AF management also had to deal with a workforce that was extremely resistant to change. However, this resistance can also be viewed as a by product of the AF culture characterized by traits of meticulous, structured, "by the book" systems maintenance and promotion of these traits both in the classroom and on the job.
- It appears that management may have devoted insufficient attention to preparing the workforce for change through training and effective communication of goals and expectations.

These initial shortfalls, compounded by the speed and forceful nature of implementation, external factors that affected the region, and inconsistent support from headquarters, appear to have contributed to the loss of trust, communication, and effectiveness in the Alaskan Region AF organization under the CMP pilot program.

The following concerns and considerations were presented to AAF-1, NATCA-E, PASS, and the Alaskan Region AF Division Manager (AAL-400) on June 4, 2001. In terms of future transition, AAF-1 should continue to provide support and guidance for building trust between Alaskan Region management, employees, and the unions. Items to consider might include:

- 3rd party oversight and mediation;
- Establishing effective 2-way communication (both up and down the chain of command);
- New leadership approach or new leaders; and
- Quickly and effectively addressing the most critical shortfalls (staffing in particular).

Another key consideration is ensuring that the Labor Management Team (LMT) transition team participants have appropriate skill sets to address all transition issues including operations under national standards and resource implications associated with transition plans. Also, AT needs to play a role in transition planning. The speed of transition should also be considered so that AAL does not repeat the same mistakes that were made during the initial implementation of the CMP pilot program. Most employees feel that it is not possible or productive to go back to pre-CMP conditions. Finally, the willingness of the LMT to consider workforce input and provide meaningful feedback is critical, as is the need to solicit employees' input on the transition processes and future state of the maintenance program.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

The goal of the Alaska Region Airway Facilities (AF) Corporate Maintenance Philosophy was to become the Provider of Choice for maintenance of the National Airspace System (NAS) by creating a maintenance concept that is very customer oriented and provides quality service at a competitive cost. The impetus for CMP was to increase facility performance and reduce costs since the Alaskan Region (AAL) historically under-performed in these areas when compared to other Regional Airway Facilities Divisions.   In 1997, the Professional Airways Systems Specialists (PASS) – District 6 and the (FAA) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to initiate the AAL CMP pilot program. The duration of the pilot was limited to three years and within the AAL region.   The MOU specifically stated that "Should the Parties wish to make permanent any initiative utilized in the Pilot, it will be by mutual consent of the Parties, and after the appropriate bargaining." The Alaskan region made immediate changes to their maintenance program which included: waivers to national standards to streamline processes, performance based maintenance, staff reductions through natural attrition, cost and resource reductions, innovative teaming approaches, training, award systems, and the execution of other changes such as making facility/equipment capital investments and continuous improvements of the CMP pilot program. The cost avoidance or cost savings were to be realized from reduced staffing and changes in work practices. The cost savings or cost avoidance was to be redirected into improving the NAS facilities during the term of the pilot. This program was exclusive to the Alaskan Region, Airways Facilities (AF) division. The CMP goals were as follows:

- Quality Service
- Increased Productivity
- Continuous Improvement
- Cost and Resource Savings
- Meeting and Anticipating Customer Needs
- Highly Qualified, Highly Motivated Workforce

At the conclusion of the three year pilot, the FAA continued with the AAL CMP and PASS subsequently filed grievances and an Unfair Labor Practice. Management/Union arbitration resulted in a Federal Labor Relations Authority ruling that required the FAA to revert back to maintenance practices and processes prior to the pilot effort. The implications of this ruling would potentially require the FAA to cover the additional costs of hiring personnel back to pre-pilot staffing levels and the costs to relocate employees that were moved during the pilot program.

A joint management-union team was assembled to conduct an internal assessment of the CMP pilot program and forward recommendations to senior agency and union officials for action. During this internal assessment process, one of the critical recommendations forwarded from the group was the need for an external assessment to document the outcomes of the CMP pilot program. This report and analysis would provide valuable data for use by the Agency at the national and regional level.

On March 8, 2001, the FAA, PASS union, and National Air Traffic Controllers Association-Engineers (NATCA-E) union entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to address labor/employee relations, maintenance programs, and staffing. The MOA also required that an organizational assessment of the CMP pilot program be conducted by June 1, 2001.

The Director of the Airway Facilities Service (AAF-1) held a teleconference with the Manager of the NAS Configuration Management & Evaluation Staff (ACM-1) on March 22, 2001 and requested that the Program Evaluation Branch (ACM-10) take a leadership role in conducting this assessment with support from Air Traffic (AT) and the Logistics Center. ACM-1 agreed and the assessment objective provided below was proposed and accepted by AAF-1, NATCA-E, PASS, and the Alaskan Region AF Division Manager (AAL-400).

Objective

The objective of the assessment was to determine employee and management experiences with the CMP pilot program relative to staffing, employee and labor relations, management oversight, and maintenance policies and procedures.

Scope

The scope of the assessment was confined to the Alaskan Region. The assessment was based purely on perceptions of the AF workforce and its customers within the Alaskan Region but was not intended to be balanced with more objective data collection in areas such as system performance, financial management, or human resource management.

Methodology

The goal of the assessment team's sampling approach was to maximize the opportunities for all AF employees in the Alaskan Region to express their opinions on the CMP pilot program while ensuring a representative cross section of views and perceptions in the Alaskan Region were captured. The following data collection methods were employed:

- Survey Questionnaire (distributed to the entire AF workforce in AAL)
- Focus Groups (representative random sample from each AAL AF organizational unit)
- Customer Interviews (managers of major AT facilities, National Airspace System Implementation Program - ANI, and Alaska Airlines)
- Employee Interviews (self-selected)
- Listening Sessions (self-selected)

The survey questionnaire and focus groups were the primary data collection methods. The remaining data collection methods provided supplemental data to maximize the opportunity for Alaskan Region workforce participation and validate themes and trends identified in the primary data collection methods. The assessment methodology details are located in Appendix A. Figure 1-1 illustrates the assessment teams major activities and their sequence during execution of the CMP assessment. On-site data collection activities were conducted from May 3 through 11, 2001.

Figure 1-1   Assessment Methodology
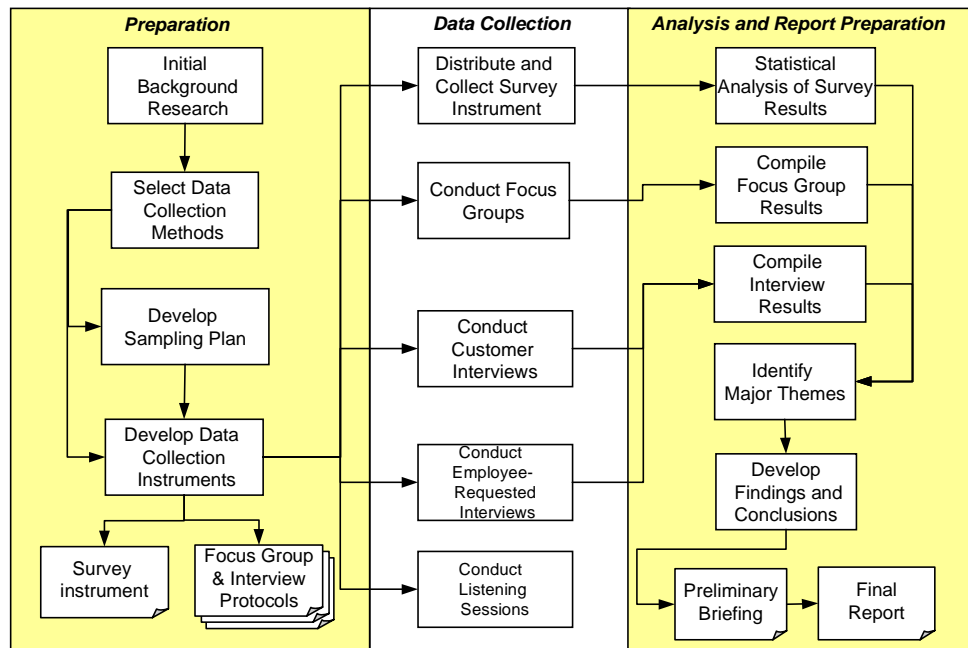
2. RESULTS SUMMARY

This section provides a consolidated summary of the Alaskan Region AF workforce's experiences and perceptions regarding the CMP pilot program. Results are organized according to data collection method. A detailed presentation of the data collected during the evaluation is included in the appendices of this report.

Before review of the assessment results, several external factors that affected the Alaskan Region during the CMP pilot program should be considered. The following external factors occurred during the CMP pilot program and some employees were either unaware or perceived that these elements were part of CMP:

- The AF nationwide hiring freeze prevented the backfill of critical positions vacated through attrition;
- The national phase-out of the Return Restoration and Re-employment (3R) program simultaneously caused the return of certified technicians to the "lower 48" while shutting down a critical pipeline of staff replacements;
- The national System Management Office (SMO) consolidation and realignment caused a reduction in management supervisory positions in the SMOs and System Service Centers (SSCs) that was independent of the CMP pilot program;
- The "fencing" of Alaskan Region PCB&T funds was discontinued by FAA Headquarters and as a result undercut the basic premise of the CMP pilot program and effectively ended its facilities infrastructure reinvestment program;

- Deployment of the Alaskan NAS Inter-facility Communications System (ANICS), a new satellite communications system in the Alaskan Region, significantly reduced outages previously caused by legacy telecommunications systems.

The fact that some of these factors were perceived to be part of the CMP pilot program points to problems with organizational communication and provides context for the results of the survey instrument, focus groups, and interviews.

A. Survey Results

The survey questionnaire was distributed to the entire Alaskan Region AF workforce. The response rate was 54% (213 out of 393 Alaskan Region AF employees completed the survey). An analysis of the data quality confirmed that the survey data was representative of the workforce. Thus, the themes from the survey results can be extrapolated to the entire AF population in Alaska with reasonable confidence. Figure 2-1 shows that the percentages of employees at each duty station are similar to the percentages of survey respondents at those stations, indicating that the survey data is representative. Employee duty stations were broken out by the Regional Office, South SMO (SA SMO) in Anchorage, North SMO (NA SMO) in Fairbanks, SA SMO other than the Anchorage location, and NA SMO other than the Fairbanks location.

Figure 2-1   Survey Population Representation
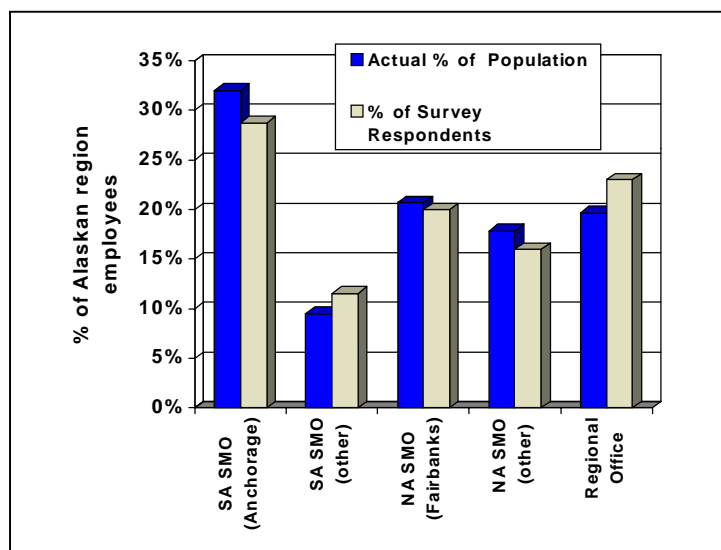
The survey questionnaire included 48 questions on staffing, labor and employee relations, management oversight, and maintenance practices related to CMP. The survey also included one question that asked whether or not the CMP program should be implemented as piloted and two open-ended questions asking employees to list the top three successes and top three concerns with CMP. The employee information section of the survey asked demographic questions about duty station, tenure, supervisory status, occupation, and grade or pay band. All surveys received by May 13, 2001 were included in the survey data analysis. The individual survey questions are

included in Appendix B. Scores were interpreted on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. A score of 2.5 would be between 'disagree' and 'neither disagree or agree'.

Overall survey results indicate that, in general, employees across the Alaskan Region did not rate the CMP pilot program favorably. As seen in Figure 2-2, employees rated management oversight slightly more favorably compared to the staffing, labor and employee relations, and maintenance policies and procedures composite scores; however, overall low scores indicate significant dissatisfaction with the CMP pilot program.

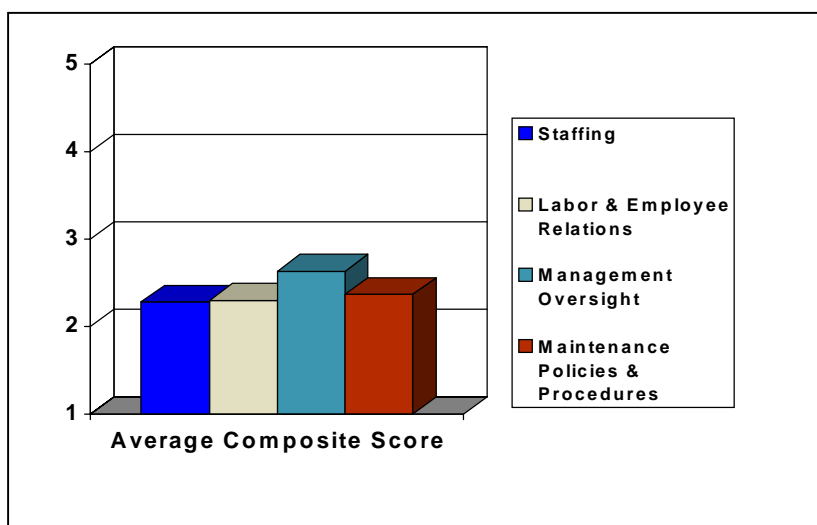*Figure 2-2   Overall Survey Results*

Figure 2-3 shows overall results broken out by duty station. As the data in Figure 2-3 indicates, employees at various duty stations varied in their opinion of the CMP pilot program.

Figure 2-3   Overall Results by Duty Station

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor and Employee Relations Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies and Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your duty station	South Alaska SMO (Anchorage)	1.93	2.14	2.43	2.14
	South Alaska SMO (Other than Anchorage)	1.75	1.96	2.25	1.89
	North Alaska SMO (Fairbanks)	2.64	2.41	2.86	2.51
	North Alaska SMO (other than Fairbanks)	2.08	2.04	2.35	2.17
	Regional Office	2.95	2.87	3.27	3.05

Although this analysis shows that the scores from the Regional Office across all four major sections of the survey were in the "neutral" range, their scores were significantly more positive, from a statistical standpoint, than other duty stations, except when compared to the North SMO (Fairbanks location). Figure 2-3 also shows, for the staffing composite score only, that the North SMO (Fairbanks location) was significantly more positive, although still in the "disagree" range, than the South SMO (all sites). Although management oversight had the highest composite scores across duty stations, these scores do not indicate support for the CMP pilot program.

The survey results were also analyzed based on the number of years held in position. Figure 2-4 shows that employees who have been in their position 1-5 years had more positive scores (although scores were still "neutral" towards the CMP pilot program) than other employee groups; particularly for employees who have been in their position 11-20 years. These results suggest that newer employees had a less negative opinion of CMP than employees with longer tenure.

Figure 2-4   Overall Results by Years in Position

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor and Employee Relations Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies and Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How many years have you been in your position?	Less than 1 year	2.28	2.25	2.69	2.24
	1-5 years	2.63	2.59	2.96	2.71
	6-10 years	2.35	2.34	2.66	2.53
	11-20 years	1.90	1.99	2.29	1.92
	Over 20 Years	1.90	1.94	2.30	1.90

Support for the CMP pilot program varied based on supervisory status. Figure 2-5 shows that Managers, followed closely by First-Line Supervisors, had higher average composite scores than survey respondents whom were non-supervisory employees. The data in this figure suggests that support for the CMP pilot program decreased as the level of supervisory responsibility decreased.

Figure 2-5   Overall Results by Supervisory Responsibility

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor and Employee Relations Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies and Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your Level of responsibility	None	2.15	2.17	2.53	2.22
	First Line Supervisor	3.59	3.38	3.69	3.67
	Manager	3.89	3.59	3.94	3.73

The survey revealed several questions that indicated high agreement and high disagreement responses. The top three survey items with high agreement revealed that:

- 60% agreed or strongly agreed to the statement: "I understood the goals of the CMP". Although there was high agreement response to this statement, the responses from the remaining 40% suggest that employees either did not understand the goals of CMP or were not sure they understood the goals.
- 49% agreed or strongly agreed to the statement: "I had access to and training in the use of required safety equipment".
- 47% agreed or strongly agreed to the statement: "My supervisor and I understood the limits of our authority to make decisions". Again, the responses suggest that the remaining employees either did not understand or were not sure of their limits of authority to make decisions.

The top three survey items with high disagreement revealed that:

- 84% disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement: "During the CMP, I believe that trust existed between managers and employees".
- 81% disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement: "AF management, staff, and unions have maintained a strong environment of collaboration and partnership throughout the duration of the CMP pilot program".
- 72% disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement: "During the CMP pilot program, the data entered in the DENALI system accurately reflected the amount of time incurred to maintain equipment".

One of the key survey statements addressed whether the CMP pilot program should be implemented as piloted. The results were mixed. Nearly half of the survey respondents (47%) thought that the CMP pilot program should not be implemented as tested in the pilot. Most of the remaining half of the survey respondents (48%) felt that the CMP pilot program should be implemented with "no", "some" or "extensive modification". Figure 2-6 shows the number and percent of employees at each duty station who were in favor of implementing CMP (with no, some or extensive modifications) or not implementing CMP.

Figure 2-6   CMP Implementation (by years in position)

		I believe the CMP program should:								Total	
		Be implemented as tested during the CMP pilot.		Be implemented with some modification.		Be implemented with extensive modification.		Not be implemented and-return to old way.			
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
How many years have you been in your position?	Less than 1 year			1	.5%	3	1.6%	3	1.6%	7	3.6%
	1-5 years	6	3.1%	22	11%	26	13%	24	12%	78	40%
	6-10 years			13	6.7%	9	4.7%	21	11%	43	22%
	11-20 years	1	.5%	4	2.1%	8	4.1%	35	18%	48	25%
	Over 20 years	1	.5%	2	1.0%	4	2.1%	10	5.2%	17	8.8%

Two open-ended survey questions asked employees to list the top three successes and top three concerns with the CMP pilot program. The results were analyzed to determine the top three unique successes and top three unique concerns of CMP.   These responses were also analyzed by duty station to determine whether there were significant variations of what employees thought were successes and failures. The analysis also revealed 20% of survey respondents that included comments listed no successes for the CMP pilot program and three respondents listed no concerns. Also, there were many more people forthcoming with comments about the failings of CMP than with its successes (452 concerns versus 274 successes). The most frequent top three successes identified by employees out of 274 total responses were:

- The Airway Facilities Training Team (AFTT) – 15%
- MSMS (the concept) and reduction of unnecessary maintenance –14.2%
- The awards and incentives programs – 9.5%

Figure 2-7 shows the top successes broken out by duty station. Specifically, the table shows that the majority of those indicating the AFTT and the MSMS as successes were stationed in Fairbanks, while the majority of those indicating the awards and incentives program as a success were stationed in the Regional Office. The awards and incentives category had the largest discrepancy between duty stations. A closer look at the table also identified that locations with remote personnel and traveling SSCs had a very low percentage of respondents that identified the awards and incentives program as a success.

Figure 2-7   Top Three CMP Successes by Duty Station

Location	AFTT	MSMS	Awards and Incentives
NA SMO, Fairbanks	26.83%	30.77%	23.08%
NA SMO, not Fairbanks	9.76%	17.95%	7.69%
SA SMO, Anchorage	24.39%	15.38%	15.38%
SA SMO, not Anchorage	21.95%	12.82%	0.00%
Regional Office	9.76%	23.08%	46.15%
Not given	7.32%	0.00%	7.69%
Total:	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

A subset of the most frequent responses for successes of CMP from the 17 managers and supervisors that responded to the survey were:

- Increased system performance – 18%
- Improved facilities and infrastructure – 18%
- AFTT, MSMS, Awards (tied) – 11% respectively for each

The survey also asked respondents to list the top three issues with CMP that caused them the greatest concern. The most frequent concerns identified by employees, out of 452 total responses, were:

- MSMS went too far in cutting maintenance (extended intervals) – 9%
- Reduction of staff was too severe – 8.2%
- Ineffective managers and poor management decisions – 6.4%

Figure 2-8 shows the top concerns broken out by duty station. Specifically, the table identifies significant variability in employee concerns identified in the survey. The South SMO employees, however, appeared to have very consistent concerns. The table also shows consistency in agreement between North SMO (Fairbanks) and South SMO (Anchorage) in that MSMS was identified as a main concern.

Figure 2-8   Top Three CMP Concerns by Duty Station

Location	MSMS	Staff reduction	Management
NA SMO, Fairbanks	29.27%	5.41%	10.34%
NA SMO, not Fairbanks	17.07%	13.51%	10.34%
SA SMO, Anchorage	29.27%	40.54%	51.72%
SA SMO, not Anchorage	14.63%	27.03%	13.79%
Regional Office	7.32%	13.51%	13.79%
Not given	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%
Total:	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

A subset of the most frequent responses for concerns of CMP from the 17 managers and supervisors that responded to the survey were also analyzed. These concerns included:

- Lack of workforce "buy-in" - 13%
- Staff reductions too severe, no feedback from or to employees, poor information dissemination, and lack of union involvement - 7% respectively for each

The CMP successes and concerns identified in the survey results were also consistent with the issues raised in employee and management focus groups. Figure 2-9 shows a graphical representation of the top three successes and top three concerns by duty station.

Figure 2-9   Alaskan Region Airway Facilities Workforce CMP Successes and Concerns
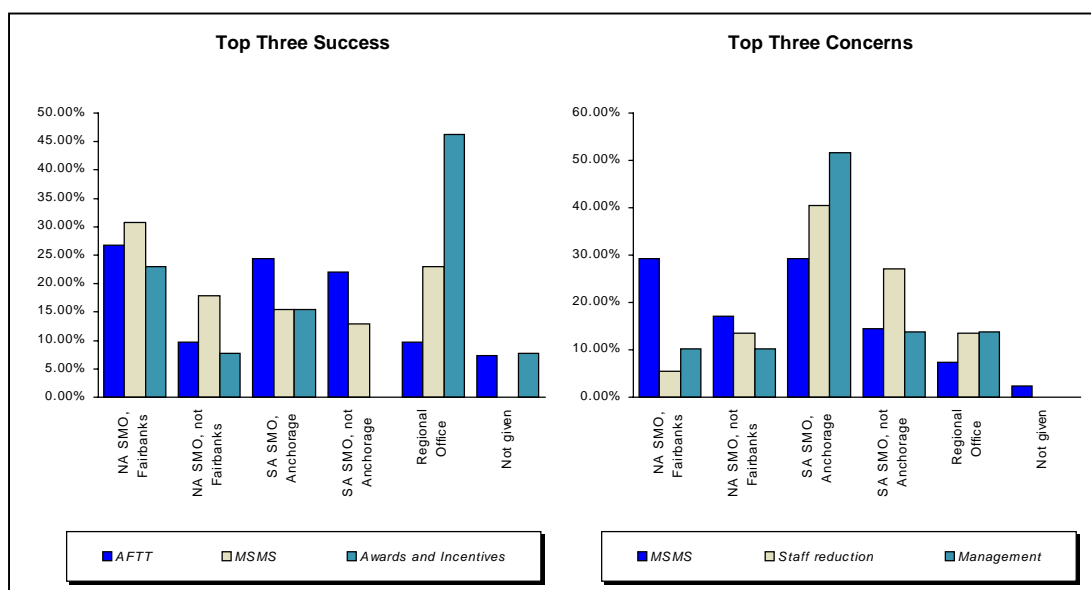
B. Focus Groups

Focus group data was analyzed to identify consistent themes within three sub-sets of the AAL population including 13 employee, 6 manager/supervisor, and 2 union leadership focus groups. Figure 2-10 shows the focus group organization and actual participation. Where they existed, varying themes were also identified between SSC and support employees, managers and supervisors, and the two union focus groups. The summary includes data captured from six discussion categories. The six categories covered the following: History and General Perspectives; Staffing; Labor and Employee Relations; Management Oversight; Maintenance Policies and Procedures; and Future Transition. Although the assessment team was tasked to cover labor and employee relations in the focus groups, it is important to note that many employees associated this category with labor management relations. Alaskan Region employees, management and union representatives experienced the impact of the CMP pilot program differently based on their roles in the organization. For example, the CMP pilot program had a greater impact on front line SSC employees performing maintenance activities than Regional Office or support employees. The following sub-section results include the views as expressed by the focus groups.

Figure 2-10   Focus Group Composition

	Focus Groups	# Planned	# Actual
Employee Focus Groups			
1	Kenai SSC Employees	4	4
2	Fairbanks SSC employees (Arctic Central, Brooks Range, Fairbanks Int'l)	10	4
3	Fairbanks Technical Support & Program Support Employees	9	9
4	NA SMO Employees in Anchorage (Bering Sea, NW, SW, Regional Support SSCs)	10	6
5	SA SMO (Anchorage and Turnagin SSCs)	9	4
6	NA SMO employees in remote locations	6	5
7	Regional Operations Employees	10	4
8	Regional Office Resource and Planning Branch Employees	6	6
9	Regional Office Executive Staff	6	5
10	ARTCC Technical Support and Program Support Employees	9	8
11	Misty Fjords SSC Employees	5	4
12	ARTCC Employees (1)	8	1
13	ARTCC Employees (2)	9	1
Manager/Supervisor Focus Groups			
14	Division Manager and Assistant Division Manager	2	2
15	Resource and Operations Branch Managers	7	3
16	SA SMO Manager and Deputy SMO Manager and ARTCC Manager	3	3
17	NA SMO Manager and Deputy	2	2
18	NA SMO SSC Supervisors	9	9
19	SA SMO Local SSC Supervisors	9	8
Total Participation for Randomly Selected Individuals		**127**	**88**
Union Leadership Focus Groups			
20	Local PASS Leadership	0*	15
21	Local NATCA-E Leadership	0*	9
Total # of Focus Group Participants			**103**
* The assessment team left an open invitation to union representative and did not randomly select union participants			

In the following subsections, we present our consolidated results for each of the focus group types, broken down into the six discussion categories.

1) Employee Focus Group Themes

History and General Perceptions: Positive aspects of the CMP included the CMP philosophy and concepts, flexibility with the maintenance schedules and the AFTT. Support employees, who generally included staff from the Regional Office and Technical Support or Program Support employees, were particularly supportive of the "Gotcha Cards" and budgeting flexibility. Negative aspects of the CMP included the poor implementation and management of the program and the general lack of communication. SSC employees were unhappy about the loss of technical proficiency and understaffing.

Staffing: The reluctance to back-fill during CMP along with the national hiring freeze hurt field operations. SSC employees felt technicians took the heaviest cuts, and reduced staffing led to increased outages and no time to train employees.   Certification issues led to inequitable workloads because there were fewer technicians in the workforce who had the necessary certification levels.

Labor and Employee Relations: Labor and management relations at the start of the CMP were good; however, employees reported that the relationship is currently very poor. Personal agendas appear to have fueled the problematic relationship. Employees believe that the current leadership must change or the leaders themselves must change their approach to improve the relationship. SSC employees were afraid of retaliation, felt threatened during CMP, and believe management did not listen to their feedback.

Management Oversight: There was no real sense of empowerment and a lot of micro-management during the CMP. Supervision at the SSC level during the CMP was reported to be poor. Specifically, SSC employees experienced considerable supervisory turnover and lack of leadership. In addition, they felt new supervisors were not technically capable of making decisions and were put in place because of their support of CMP. Support employees felt that inexperienced supervisors (both technically and managerially) were put in difficult situations. In some instances, employees simply felt that bad managers were put in these positions.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures: Mean time to restore increased. This was partially due to curtailment of rotational staffing that was institutionalized prior to CMP. Pre-CMP rotational staffing allowed technicians to be closer to remote facilities. Some new maintenance intervals established during CMP were good and some were not adequate. SSC employees claimed that maintenance records were finessed to put CMP in the best light. However, support employees reported that they didn't know if allegations of "cooking the books" were true. Support employees recognized savings from CMP were reinvested into facilities and infrastructure whereas SSC field employees were not sure where the money went.

Future Transition: Most employees do not like the idea of going back to pre-CMP conditions and think a focus on current National Standards is needed. For a successful transition, there needs to be a focus on communication, information dissemination, and follow-through on feedback.

2) Union Leadership Focus Group Themes:

History and General Perceptions: Union leadership reported that there was a sense of pride and ownership before CMP. There were several aspects about CMP that did not work including the poor implementation, the feedback loop, and diminished communication. NATCA-E felt the flexible maintenance schedules and budgeting worked; conversely, PASS did not consider any part of CMP as a success.

Staffing: NATCA-E and PASS both believed there was not enough staff to accomplish the required work. Management was slow to recognize the staffing shortages compounded by the national hiring freeze. PASS representatives felt that much of the required work is not getting done and many technicians were and currently are working a lot of overtime, which is also seriously affecting their personal lives.

Labor and Employee Relations: NATCA-E and PASS both agreed that Labor Management Relations is broken and there is no trust. The perception was that the former PASS

representative went along with whatever management wanted, was quickly promoted and then exercised his return rights. PASS representatives indicated that prior to CMP, there were good relationships between first line managers and technicians but now there is neither communication nor partnership. NATCA-E leadership reported that they wanted agreements documented whereas the Alaskan Region management preferred more informal interaction.

Management Oversight: Prior to CMP, the organization had informed managers. Managers who didn't agree with CMP were "gotten rid of" or moved and the new managers do not have the needed skills to manage effectively. NATCA-E expressed that there was too much micro-management. PASS said that there was no empowerment and management stopped listening to feedback.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures: Union representatives believe the performance and outage reports were skewed or altered to reflect increased performance and reduced outages. These representatives also believed that the region has redefined the criteria for what constitutes an outage. NATCA-E representatives felt that CMP worked for most maintenance but there was not enough money for the Facility Improvement Teams (FITs). In addition, the awards program was inequitable. PASS representatives felt maintenance guidance was not clear and SSCs had difficulty getting funds for anything but FITs. These representatives did not feel any money was really saved as a result of CMP.

Future Transition: In order to have a successful transition, the Alaskan Region needs to go to the current National Standards, "get rid of current management", and develop a system of checks and balances. NATCA-E felt the bargaining agreement tenets need to be applied, supervisors should be able to make some of their own decisions, and a revitalization of the employees must occur. PASS felt there needs to be a focus on re-building trust and that the organization needs to hire 187 new technicians.

3) Management and Supervisor Focus Group Themes

History and General Perceptions: Managers and supervisors reported that the Airway Facilities Training Team (AFTT) worked well. CMP was a great concept, but the execution was poor in the areas of communication, feedback, and inconsistent support from AAF-1 during the pilot period.

Staffing: The staffing levels dropped during the CMP and then the national hiring freeze prevented re-staffing to an adequate level. In many cases there were not enough technicians to do the work. Managers and supervisors acknowledged that many staff retired and some were reassigned, however, they could not say that they were necessarily forced out because they didn't agree with the CMP. Supervisors felt there was no comprehensive analysis or plan for staffing level requirements.

Labor and Employee Relations: Managers and supervisors reported that a positive labor management relationship existed at the beginning of CMP but the current labor management relationship is very poor and there is no trust. A degradation in communication and trust and changes in union leadership were some of the reasons why the labor management relationship

turned adversarial. Also, leadership on both sides began to reject the idea of partnership during CMP.

Management Oversight: From the managers and supervisors perspective, CMP offered employees more control over their work if they chose to embrace the responsibility and accountability that came along with empowerment. However, it was difficult for many employees to embrace this new way of doing business. There wasn't enough done to help employees make the necessary changes. Some supervisors also reported that they felt micro-managed by higher levels of management.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures: Managers and supervisors believed that the MSMS allowed for more efficient maintenance schedules, but modifications are necessary. Managers and supervisors also liked having the rewards program as a recognition tool; however, they acknowledged that there were perceptions of inequitable distribution of awards particularly by the field SSC employees. Cost savings were used to make much needed upgrades to equipment and facilities.

Future Transition: Managers and supervisors agreed that it would be difficult to go back to the old way of doing business. Some believe that more time (more than 3-5 years) is needed to see real change in the organization. Several parts of the CMP should be retained including the AFTT, the awards program, flexibility in maintenance schedules, and flexibility with budgets. In order to move forward, labor and management will need to focus on the core business issues rather than personal attacks and agendas.

C. Customer Interviews

The assessment team interviewed AF customers in order to obtain their perspectives on the CMP pilot program. The team interviewed managers from major Air Traffic (AT) facilities in the Alaskan Region, the local ANI Manager, and a representative from Alaska Airlines. The assessment team conducted a total of 12 interviews using a standard interview protocol tailored for AF customers. Participants included the Alaskan Region Air Traffic Division Manager, Air Traffic Control Tower Managers in Anchorage and Fairbanks, the ARTCC Manager, the ANI Manager, and several AFSS managers. Similar to the focus group data analysis, the team reviewed all responses to identify cross cutting themes and identify illustrative comments to accurately characterize customer views on the CMP pilot program.

History and General Perceptions: Airway Facilities customers reported that AF had very limited consultation with AT counterparts at the beginning of CMP and the majority of AT managers at the major facilities in Alaska received no formal communication about CMP goals, processes, or implementation. Managers of other AT facilities throughout Alaska learned about the program informally through inquiries and interactions with their local AF counterparts.

Staffing: Air Traffic customers believed that AF technical staff levels were too low to meet their needs; however AF technicians did a superior job if and when they were available. Specifically, AT facility managers were upset about the lack of on-site AF support at remote facilities due to the CMP pilot approach. Similarly, ANI needs were not being met because there were not enough AF technical staff available to support Joint Acceptance Inspection (JAI) processes.

Airline customers would also like to see a return to on-site AF support at remote sites as outages of navigational aids and landing systems has a significant impact on their revenue.

Labor and Employee Relations: AF customers generally had no significant comments regarding labor relations.

Management Oversight: Air Traffic reported that there was no feeling of partnership between AT and AF leadership in Alaska. Specifically, AT customers believed that AF no longer regards them as a primary customer. In addition, AT facility managers believe there was no continuity at the SSC manager level due to various manager re-assignment actions.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures: AF customers believe that the CMP has resulted in longer outages and increased restoration times. AT facility managers did not believe the improved system performance numbers of AAL equipment shown to them by AF managers. In general, customers believe that the condition of facilities throughout the Alaskan Region has deteriorated as a result of CMP.

Future Transition: In order to transition beyond the CMP pilot program, AT managers believe that they should be involved in transition planning and implementation of future AF maintenance processes. In addition, AT customers would like to see a new emphasis on maintenance of AT facilities. Finally, customers believe that AF needs to be more "customer service oriented".

D. Employee Requested Interviews

Alaskan Region AF employees were given the opportunity to schedule an individual interview with the assessment team between May 3 and May 11, 2001. A total of 44 employees requested and participated in either personal telephone interviews or individual interviews held in the Anchorage and Fairbanks local areas. Interviewers led the discussion using a standardized interview protocol similar to the protocol used for the focus groups. Interviewees were assured complete confidentiality. Interviewees were also informed that data would be reported back to union and management and aggregated with other interview data. The following trends and themes were identified across the interviews.

History and General Perceptions: Employees consistently reported several positive aspects of the CMP. Most agreed that the concept was good. The MSMS concept offered flexibility and a focus on value-added maintenance activities. The AFTT and the Gotcha Card awards were universally praised. The CMP also allowed for much needed upgrades to the Alaskan Region NAS infrastructure. Negative aspects of the CMP included the manner in which it was implemented. Specifically, employees believed that it was implemented too fast and forceful. Employees felt that they were not valued and respected by management and there was no feedback mechanism nor "checks and balances" to provide for more effective implementation.

Staffing: Employees believed that no resource plan existed to determine optimal attrition levels for the CMP pilot program. Current staffing levels and skill mix (right people in right place) were not adequate for the CMP pilot program. In order to ensure that work was accomplished,

employees reported that they performed the work on their own time (without compensation). Employees did this because they were genuinely concerned for the safety of the flying public.

Labor and Employee Relations: Employees consistently reported that labor and employee relations with management were good prior to CMP and began to deteriorate subsequent to implementation. Deteriorated relationships also led to overall lack of trust and communication, which in turn contributed to employee's fear of retaliation by management if they complained or commented unfavorably about CMP.

Management Oversight: Many employees reported that they felt micro-managed and very little sense of empowerment. In addition, employees believed that management's approach to implementing CMP discouraged employee input. The lack of an effective feedback mechanism to the MSMS process was an example. Many employees reported that experienced supervisors were removed and replaced by new inexperienced supervisors with no technical knowledge and/or managerial experience. This fueled the perception that anyone would be removed from their position if they questioned or did not support CMP.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures: In general, employees reported that MSMS maintenance intervals were adequate in certain areas, but not across the board. The criteria used to modify maintenance were not clearly conveyed to the workforce and a feedback loop did not exist to effectively capture employee input and report the outcome. This essentially discouraged employee input to the process. Many employees also believed that performance data were changed or falsified in order to make CMP look favorable.

Future Transition: Most employees believed that the Alaskan Region needs to transition to National Standards but bring logical elements of CMP into the plan (e.g. MSMS, AFTT, Gotcha Cards, FIT concepts). Employees also agreed that future transitions would require increased communications, more trust, and a commitment to place personal agendas aside.

3. FINDINGS

The analysis of data collected during this assessment was based purely on the perceptions of the AF workforce in the Alaskan Region but was not intended to be balanced with more objective data collection in areas such as system performance, financial management, or human resource management. The output of this report is not intended to be a comprehensive organizational assessment of the AF organization in Alaska under CMP but rather a single aspect of such an evaluation centered on employee perceptions.

The assessment team findings are derived from commonly identified themes among the various groups and data collection methods used in our assessment and represent the team's interpretation of the data collected in the survey, focus groups, and interviews. The issues identified in these findings need to be considered or addressed by the Labor Management Team (LMT) as they work to rebuild the trust and effectiveness of the Alaskan Region's AF organization. It is important for the LMT to review the detailed focus group results presented in the appendices, as the findings presented in this section do not address the entire spectrum of issues identified during our data analysis.

Staffing levels are too low.

There was no apparent plan for staff reduction and no target levels were ever communicated to the workforce. Attrition drove the staffing reductions instead of a central plan and unbalanced overages and shortfalls resulted. The SMOs and SSCs were hardest hit by the staffing reductions. SA SMO was particularly affected with many employees saying that they were "burned-out". This assertion was also supported by SA SMO's open ended survey responses. The AF national hiring freeze put AAL in a precarious position. The staffing section in the survey questionnaire received the lowest mean score, which indicates extreme dissatisfaction with the current AF staffing levels in AAL. "Reduction of staff was too severe" was one of the top criticisms of the CMP pilot program from the survey.

There was severe degradation of communication and trust in the Alaskan Region's AF work environment.

Management believed that they could have done a better job of communicating with the workforce during the CMP pilot program. The feedback mechanism did not work as envisioned. The regional division manager and the core team discounted negative criticism of the CMP pilot program causing a shutdown of the feedback loop. Management did not effectively communicate the objectives of CMP and the rationale for their actions. As a result, workforce interpretations and perceptions became reality. An example of this shortfall is that the significant turnover of managers and supervisors under CMP contributed to employees having considerable fear of retaliation if they did not support CMP. Trust between AF regional management and the workforce has been lost. Allegations of falsifying system performance figures is a prime example. The fact that the mean score for the survey questionnaire was skewed so far to the "disagree" side of the response scale also indicates a lack of "buy-in." Employees consistently reported that they were unaware of the reinvestment of CMP savings.

CMP implementation was poor.

There was a lack of sufficient preparation for an organizational change of this magnitude and management did not provide the continued attention that this type of cultural change needed over the life of the pilot program. Specific objectives for the program were not clearly articulated. The CMP goals were strategic in nature. The tactical plans for achieving those goals were not clearly communicated to the workforce. While MSMS allowed for the elimination of non-value-added maintenance tasks, it did not adequately address certification intervals for complex equipment such as radars, navigational aids and landing systems.

CMP was inconsistently implemented across the region. SMOs and SSCs took on the bulk of the change activities. The program had less of an effect on the Regional Office and other support personnel. There was little preparation or training for the employees most affected by CMP (SSC Technicians) to transition from a structured work environment to the autonomy provided by the CMP pilot program. The three year limit and the interim CMP evaluation (after one year of the pilot program) placed undue pressure on management to show immediate improvement.

During the CMP pilot program, the Alaskan Region received inconsistent support from AAF-1 and FAA headquarters that contributed to the difficulties they encountered.

The national AF hiring freeze prevented the back filling of positions. The reduction of authorized staffing levels and discontinued "fencing" of PCB&T funding effectively ended CMP reinvestment, which was one of the significant successes of the pilot program. The phase out of the 3R Program caused both a loss of skilled technicians in the Alaskan Region and the elimination of a critical source for back filling key staff positions.

The Adversarial Relationship between Management and Labor Must Change.

Management's interpretation of partnership with PASS at the beginning of CMP relied too heavily on personal relationships with regional representatives rather than a generally accepted methodology for interacting with the union. Further, the change in union leadership at the Alaskan Region level seems to have contributed to both sides shutting down communication. The current relationship is hampered by personal agendas. Finally, both management and labor contributed to the outcome of the CMP pilot program.

There were some positive aspects of the CMP program.

Some MSMS intervals made sense and should continue. The flexibility of maintenance practices and budget management provided by CMP also should be considered. The AFTT was universally praised. CMP reinvestment programs allowed the Alaskan Region to replace troublesome infrastructure elements with equipment that was much more reliable (UPS, solid-state radios, etc.). Although many thought the implementation was inequitable, the awards program was noted as a positive part of the CMP pilot program. The Gotcha Cards received kudos from many employees, particularly non-SSC employees that had access to gift stores.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions presented in this section represent the assessment team's interpretations of significant contributing factors that impacted events and decisions during the CMP pilot.

The AF Regional Division Manager in Alaska had a sincere desire to improve his region's performance and implement GPRA initiatives. PASS partnership was strong in the 1996-1997 timeframe. If any major changes were going to be implemented, that was the time to try. It appears as if AF leadership in the Alaskan Region took the path of least resistance as it implemented the CMP pilot program. The tendency to bypass potential roadblocks rather than confront them head-on may have significantly undermined the effectiveness of the CMP pilot program. Limiting CMP to a three year pilot was the only way to make it palatable to both AAF-1 and PASS national leadership and allow for its immediate adoption and implementation. However, a change of this magnitude requires at least 5-6 years of continued and nurtured attention. Limiting the agreement to three years jeopardized the potential for sufficient workforce buy-in and cultural changes necessary to ensure the pilot's success. Also, AF

leadership in Alaska noted that they limited AT involvement in initial CMP planning since AT was perceived to be a roadblock to CMP implementation.

Many of the AF employees in Alaska believe that CMP, the MSMS in particular, were implemented too quickly. It appeared as if management wanted to put MSMS in place right away, prove the concept quickly, and make the case for national adoption. Accordingly, SSC employees believed that management was not interested in hearing negative feedback on MSMS or CMP as a whole. AF management also had to deal with a workforce that was extremely resistant to change. However, this resistance can also be viewed as a by product of the AF culture characterized by traits of meticulous, structured, "by the book" systems maintenance and promotion of these traits both in the classroom and on the job. Therefore, it appears that management may have devoted insufficient attention to preparing their workforce for change through training and effective communication of goals and expectations. These initial shortfalls, compounded by the speed and forceful nature of implementation, external factors, and inconsistent support from headquarters, appear to have contributed to the loss of trust, communication, and effectiveness in the Alaskan Region AF organization under CMP.

The following concerns and considerations were presented to AAF-1, NATCA-E, PASS, and AAL-400 on June 4, 2001. In terms of future transition, AAF-1 should continue to provide support and guidance for building trust between Alaskan Region management, employees, and the unions. Items to consider might include:

- 3rd party oversight and mediation;
- Establishing effective 2-way communication (both up and down the chain of command);
- New leadership approach or new leaders; and
- Quickly and effectively addressing the most critical shortfalls (staffing in particular).

Another key consideration is ensuring that the LMT transition team participants have appropriate skill sets to address all transition issues including operations under national standards and resource implications associated with transition plans. Also, AT needs to play a role in transition planning. The speed of transition should also be considered so that AAL does not repeat the same mistakes that were made during the initial implementation of the CMP pilot program. Most employees feel that it is not possible or productive to go back to pre-CMP conditions. Finally, the willingness of the LMT to consider workforce input and provide meaningful feedback is critical, as is the need to solicit employees' input on the transition processes and future state of the maintenance program.

APPENDIX A—ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The goal of the assessment team's assessment methodology was to maximize the opportunities for all AF employees in the Alaskan Region to voice their opinions on the CMP pilot program while ensuring that we obtained a representative cross section of views and perceptions in the Alaskan Region. The assessment team distributed a survey questionnaire and conducted focus groups as its primary data collection methods. These two methods provided the most useable and representative data on employee perceptions of CMP given the limited amount of time available to conduct the assessment. The assessment team also used the following supplemental data collection methods to maximize the opportunity for Alaskan Region workforce participation and validate themes and trends identified in our primary data gathering:

- Customers Interviews (managers of major AT facilities, ANI, and Alaska Airlines);
- Employee Interviews (self-selected); and
- Listening Sessions (self-selected).

In the following subsections, we provide a detailed description of each data collection method used in this assessment.

Survey Questionnaire

Survey questionnaires were distributed to all AF employees on the payroll in the Alaskan Region. FAA payroll operations printed mailing labels for each employee. Individual surveys were sealed in envelopes and the mailing labels were affixed. ACM-10 sent all surveys associated with a cost center directly to a contact person located in that cost center who then distributed the surveys to individual employees. Follow-up calls were made to ensure surveys were received at the cost center locations.

The survey included questions that focused on areas of concern noted in the March 8, 2001 Memorandum of Agreement between PASS, NATCA-E and FAA. The survey contained an Organizational Experience section that consisted of:

- 48 questions on Staffing, Labor and Employee Relations, Management Oversight, and Maintenance Practices related to the CMP;
- One question about whether or not the CMP program should be implemented as piloted; and
- Two open-ended questions asking employees to list the top three successes and top three concerns with the CMP.

The Employee Information section asked demographic questions about duty station, tenure, supervisory status, occupation, and grade or pay band.

All surveys received by May 13, 2001 were included in the survey data analysis. Statistical analysis software was used to produce the following types of information:

- Frequency or percentage of response categories for each question;
- The average or mean rating for each question;
- Analysis of variance to determine if there were significant response differences between different demographic groups on each question;
- Further multi-variate statistics to determine exactly which demographic groups' responses were different from one another and the magnitude of that difference.
- Analysis of the two open-ended questions to determine the most frequently occurring responses.

Focus Groups

Typical focus groups include five to ten participants to ensure the moderators can obtain feedback from all participants. In the Alaskan region, face-to-face focus groups were designed for 10 participants. Focus groups held via teleconference were designed for 4-6 participants.

The total number of focus groups was selected to ensure representation of the Regional Office, North Alaska SMO and South Alaska SMO. In some cases multiple work units were combined to selected participants for a single focus group. Work units were combined based on similarity of work function and geographic proximity. Where noted, participants were selected from multiple organizations to form the focus group. Individual employees were randomly selected to participate in a focus group in the following manner:

- The total number of staff possible for participation in a focus group (e.g., all employees in the Operations Branch) was divided by the total possible number of participants (For example, 50 employees / 10 = 5.)
- The result of that calculation was then used to count off and select the participants. In the example of a group with 50 employees every 5th person would be selected for participation. Therefore in a case of 30 total employees, every 3rd person would be selected.
- The selected persons were then reviewed to ensure all of the different occupations in the employee group were represented in the focus group. If not, an employee from that missing occupation was randomly selected to also participate in the focus group.

In Figure A-1, we provide a description of the focus groups conducted with Alaskan Region AF workforce members.

Figure A-1   Focus Group Composition

Focus Groups	Multiple Participating Organizations
Remote Site Kenai SSC	
Division Manager and Assistant Division Manager	
Resource Management and Operations Branch Managers	
NATCA-E Leadership	Designated by NATCA-E
SA SMO Managers	
SA SMO SSC Supervisors	
PASS Leadership	Designated by PASS
NA SMO Managers	
NA SMO SSC Supervisors	
Local NA SSC Employees	Arctic Central SSC Brooks Range SSC Fairbanks International SSC
Technical Support and Program Support Employees - NA	Technical Support Unit Program Support Unit
NA-SMO Employees *located in Anchorage*	Bering Sea SSC Northwest Alaska SSC Southwest Alaska SSC Regional Support Group SSC
SA-SMO SSC	Anchorage SSC Turnagain SSC
NA- SMO SSC Employees *in Remote locations*	Bering Sea SSC Northwest SSC Southwest SSC Regional Support Group SSC
Operations Branch Employees	
Resource Management Branch Employees	
Executive Staff	
Technical and Program Support Employees – SA	Technical Support Unit Program Support Unit
SA- SMO Misty Fjords SSC	Juneau Work Center Ketchikan Work Center Sitka Work Center
ARTCC Employees	Environmental Support SSC Automation SSC
ARTCC Employees	SATCOM SSC MCC SSC

The goal of our focus group sampling methodology was to capture differences in opinion due to differences based on demographic characteristics (e.g., location, occupation, and supervisory level). Focus groups only included staff of similar levels to encourage open dialogue and all participants were ensured complete confidentiality. Participants were told that data would be reported back to union representatives and management aggregated with other focus group feedback. A standardized interview protocol was used to guide the focus group discussion. We grouped questions in the following categories:

- History and General Perspectives;
- Staffing;
- Labor and Employee Relations;
- Management Oversight;
- Maintenance Practices and Polices;
- Future Transition.

Although the assessment team was tasked to cover labor and employee relations in the focus groups, it is important to note that many employees associated this category with labor management relations.

The assessment team used the following process to analyze data gathered in focus groups:

- Analyzing manager and supervisory focus group data separately from employee focus group and union focus group data;
- Identifying cross-cutting themes (issues mentioned in at least two or more groups) for each question;
- Noting areas of difference in opinion between support employees and field SSC employees as well as between first-line supervisors and managers; and
- Listing illustrative participant comments to provide further clarification for major themes.

Employee-Requested Interviews

Employees were given the opportunity to schedule an individual interview with the ACM-10 assessment team between May 3 and May 11, 2001. A total of 44 employees requested and participated in individual interviews. Interviewers led the discussion using a standardized interview protocol similar to the protocol used for the focus groups. Interviewees were ensured complete confidentiality. Interviewees were told that data would be reported back to union representatives and management aggregated with other interview data. The interviewers worked as a team to identify trends and themes across all interviews for each interview question.

Listening Sessions

As a final alternative for collecting employee feedback, the ACM-10 assessment team set up "Listening Sessions" in which anyone in the Alaskan Region could participate. The sessions were scheduled in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Separate sessions were planned for employees, supervisors/managers and the union. The sessions were designed to offer an opportunity to express opinions about the CMP program in a group setting. No one participated in the three Listening Sessions scheduled for non-supervisory employees. However, three employees participated in an ad-hoc listening session. Views expressed in the listening session were consistent with those from other data collection methods.

APPENDIX B—SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Airway Facilities, Alaska Region
Organization Assessment Survey

The Office of Program Evaluation (ACM-10) is conducting an objective, unbiased survey of employee experiences with the Corporate Maintenance Philosophy (CMP) program implemented in the Alaska Region. PASS, NATCA, ALASKA Region management, and senior AAF management requested the assessment. This survey was specifically designed to assess current workforce perceptions of the CMP program.

This survey consists of two parts, Part I - Organizational Experiences and Part II – Background & Employment Status.

Part I - Organizational Experiences with the CMP Program
  This part of the survey asks you to describe the conditions in your organization. You should consider the experience of others, as well as your own experiences.

Part II – Background & Employment Status
  The following questions ask about your background and employment status. Your answers to these questions will help us look at survey results by sub-group, for example occupational series or duty station. Responses will NOT be used to identify individual people.

The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. When answering the questions in the survey, please use a ballpoint pen or marker to darken the circle corresponding to the response you choose. Please answer each question as accurately as possible. Questions regarding this survey may be directed to Zena Huen on the ACM team at 1-202-358-5273.

Please return your completed survey via toll free fax to 1-866-207-4100 (no cover sheet required) no later than **Wednesday, May 9, 2001**. If you do not have access to a fax machine, please return your survey in a sealed envelope to Susan Gardner, ACM-10, via FAA mail.

Thank you for your time and participation.

PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCES

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know
This part of the survey asks you to describe the conditions in your organization. You should consider the experience of others, as well as your own experiences. Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following questions. Please use the "Do Not Know" answer only if you feel you do not have enough information to <u>answer the question accurately.</u> Please use the following scale to make your ratings: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Disagree nor Agree (N); Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Do Not Know (DK)						
Staffing						
1. Under the CMP, AF staff had the correct mix of technical skills and training to effectively maintain the NAS infrastructure in the Alaska Region.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Under the CMP, AF management had the correct mix of leadership skills and training to effectively manage the NAS infrastructure in the Alaska Region.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. There is sufficient staffing to maintain NAS equipment in accordance with national orders and standards.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. During the CMP program, staffing was sufficient to respond to critical outages within the CMP goals of reasonable timeframes.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Under the CMP program, staff were located in the proper geographic locations to optimize resources and still maintain a safe NAS..	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6. Under the CMP pilot, the distribution of work among employees in my work unit was fair.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
7. Given the national hiring restrictions that management was under during the CMP pilot, the Alaskan Region had the appropriate processes in place to address the loss of required technical skills due to attrition..	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8. Under the CMP, managers were aware of skill gaps that resulted from attrition and attempted to resolve them in a timely manner.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Under the CMP, managers schedule time for employees to perform hands-on (refresher) proficiency training.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. Under the CMP, management works with staff to resolve employee relocation issues in accordance with National Policies , orders and regulations.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. When CMP related required training, I had access to the appropriate training.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12. When CMP related changes required training, adequate time was provided for the training.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Labor and Employee Relations						
13. I understood the goals of the CMP program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
14. My role in achieving CMP goals was fully communicated at the beginning of the pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
15. Management's role in achieving CMP goals was fully communicated to me at the beginning of the pilot program	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
16. I received regular updates on the progress made toward CMP goals.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
17. I felt free to express their opinions and make constructive recommendations about the CMP program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
18. AF management worked closely with staff and union representatives to design and implement the CMP pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know
This part of the survey asks you to describe the conditions in your organization. You should consider the experience of others, as well as your own experiences. Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following questions. Please use the "Do Not Know" answer only if you feel you do not have enough information to <u>answer the question accurately.</u> Please use the following scale to make your ratings: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Disagree nor Agree (N); Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Do Not Know (DK)						
19. AF management, staff and the unions have maintained a strong environment of collaboration and partnership throughout the duration of the CMP pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
20. I received information on what it means to be a "business partner" with management and how I would participate in redesigning their work.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
21. The business partnership process was fully implemented and followed throughout the duration of the CMP pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
22. Managers keep employees informed about the organization's conditions and operations, as well as the challenges it faces (for example, budget cuts, authorized staffing levels, reorganizations).	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
23. The mechanisms for providing employee feedback were effective under the CMP pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
24. My issues and concerns related to the CMP program were resolved.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
25. I received regular communication about the purpose and methods for modifying the CMP throughout the duration of the pilot program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
26. During the CMP, I believe trust existed among my peers.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
27. During the CMP, I believe trust existed between management and employees.						
28. During the CMP, I believe trust existed between management and employees.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Management Oversight						
29. Management and staff share accountability and responsibility for the maintenance of NAS equipment.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
30. I was empowered to make decisions that are appropriate for my positions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
31. My supervisors were empowered to make decisions that were appropriate for their positions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
32. My supervisors and I understood the limits of our authority to make decisions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
33. Managers and supervisors followed Agency policy and orders to ensure a safe work environment (facilities and vehicles) for employees.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
34. I had access to and training in the use of safety equipment.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
35. Agency policy and orders were followed in regard to employee security and safety in remote locations.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
36. Availability and readiness reporting was consistent with the actual state of NAS equipment.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
37. National procedures for outage reporting were consistently applied throughout the region.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
38. During the CMP Pilot Program, the DENALI system data accurately reflected the amount of time needed to maintain NAS equipment.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know
This part of the survey asks you to describe the conditions in your organization. You should consider the experience of others, as well as your own experiences. Using the scale below, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following questions. Please use the "Do Not Know" answer only if you feel you do not have enough information to <u>answer the question accurately.</u> Please use the following scale to make your ratings: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Disagree nor Agree (N); Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Do Not Know (DK)						
39. My managers listened to and gave appropriate attention to my feedback on equipment status..	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Maintenance Polices and Practices						
40. Employees are routinely involved in decisions regarding determination of value-added and non-value-added maintenance tasks.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
41. I received sufficient guidance about eliminating non-value-added maintenance tasks.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
42. Revisions to maintenance schedules were logical and did not compromise the safety and efficiency of NAS standards.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
43. Most regional supplements provided clear guidance on which maintenance activities were required and how frequently they must be performed.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
44. The availability and readiness of NAS equipment improved under the CMP Pilot Program.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
45. AF management shared information about savings realized as a result of the CMP program with me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
46. The results of cost savings reinvestment under the CMP program were clearly communicated to me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
47. Management shared its methodology for selecting and prioritizing investments in facility improvements and the employee rewards program with me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
48. CMP pilot program savings were used to improve facilities and employee rewards.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

CMP Program

49.   I believe the CMP program should: (circle one)

   ❍   Be implemented as tested during the CMP Pilot

   ❍   Be implemented with some modification

   ❍   Be implemented with extensive modification.

   ❍   Not be implemented and the Alaska Region should return to the previous way of doing business.

Please clearly print your answers to the next two questions in the space provided.

50.   Please list the top three successes of the CMP program.

_____

_____

_____

51.   Please list the three issues with the CMP that cause you the greatest concern.

_____

_____

_____

PART II- BACKGROUND AND EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

The following questions ask about your background and employment status. Your answers to these questions will help us look at survey results by <u>sub-group</u>, for example occupation or duty station. Responses will <u>NOT </u>be used to identify individual people.

52.   How long have you been with the Federal Government?
   ❍ Less than 1 year
   ❍ 1-5 years
   ❍ 6-10 years
   ❍ 11-20 years
   ❍ Over 20 years

53.   How long have you been with the Alaskan Region?
   ❍ Less than 1 year
   ❍ 1-5 years
   ❍ 6-10 years
   ❍ 11-20 years
   ❍ Over 20 years

54.   How many years have you been in your position?
   ❍ Less than 1 year
   ❍ 1-5 years
   ❍ 6-10 years
   ❍ 11-20 years
   ❍ Over 20 years

55.   What is your duty station?
   ❍ South Alaska SMO (Anchorage)
   ❍ South Alaska SMO (other than Anchorage)
   ❍ North Alaska SMO (Fairbanks)
   ❍ North Alaska SMO (other than Fairbanks)
   ❍ Regional Office

56. What is your level of supervisory responsibility?
   ❍ None
   ❍ First line supervisor
   ❍ Manager

57. What is your occupational series? (Example: 2102-ATSS)

   _____

58. What is your grade or pay band?

   ❍ E   ❍ K   ❍ 11
   ❍ F   ❍ 3   ❍ 12
   ❍ G   ❍ 7   ❍ 13
   ❍ H   ❍ 8   ❍ 14
   ❍ I   ❍ 9
   ❍ J   ❍ 10

Please return your completed survey via toll free fax to 1-866-207-4100 (no cover sheet required) no later than **Wednesday, May 9, 2001**. If you do not have access to a fax machine, please return your survey in a sealed envelope to Susan Gardner, ACM-10, via FAA mail.

APPENDIX C—SURVEY RESULTS

This appendix provides results of statistical analysis performed on the responses to our survey instrument. The survey, which appears in Appendix B, included 48 declarative statements with a response scale to indicate the level of the participants' agreement or disagreement. We included the following response options and assigned scores according to the following scale to aid in our results analysis:

- Strongly Disagree = 1
- Disagree = 2
- Neither Disagree nor Agree = 3
- Agree = 4
- Strongly Agree = 5

The results are presented in tabular format and include all declarative statements from the survey instrument, the number of responses to each statement, average scores, and standard deviation for survey items and composites). This information allow you to quickly identify high/low scores for a particular item. Figure C-1 illustrates how to interpret the survey's descriptive statistics.

Figure C-1   Interpretation of Survey Results

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Under the CMP, the AF staff had the correct mix of technical skills and training to effectively maintain the NAS infrastructure in the Alaska region.	201	2.44	1.37
Staffing Average Composite Score	209	2.2795	1.0964
Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	212	2.2960	
Valid N (listwise)	201		

Survey statement

Name of Composite score

# of employees who responded to the statement

Average of all staffing statements; overall employees disagree with the staffing statements

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I understood the goals of the CMP program.	205	3.50	1.30
My role in achieving CMP goals was fully communicated at the beginning of the pilot program.	199	2.83	1.40
Management's role in achieving CMP goals was fully communicated to me at the beginning of the pilot program.	200	2.60	1.36
I received regular updates on the progress made toward CMP goals.	207	2.35	1.30
I felt free to express my opinions and make constructive recommendations about the CMP program.	207	2.10	1.38
AF management worked closely with staff and union representatives to design and implement the CMP pilot program.	192	2.42	1.49
AF management, staff, and the unions have maintained a strong environment of collaboration and partnership throughout the duration of the CMP pilot program.	208	1.66	.97
I received information on what it means to be a "business partner" with management and how I would participate in redesigning my work.	203	2.18	1.16
The business partnership process was fully implemented and followed throughout the duration of the CMP pilot program.	199	1.85	1.10
Managers kept employees informed about the organization's conditions and operations, as well as the challenges it faces (e.g., budget cuts, authorized staffing levels, reorganizations).	212	2.37	1.28
The mechanisms for providing employee feedback were effective under the CMP pilot program.	204	1.94	1.11
My issues and concerns related to the CMP program were resolved.	195	2.03	1.20
Valid N (listwise)	164		

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I received regular communication about the purpose and methods for modifying the CMP throughout the duration of the pilot program.	207	2.17	1.18
During the CMP, I believe trust existed among my peers.	209	2.51	1.40
During the CMP, I believe trust existed between my first line supervisor and employees.	211	2.48	1.39
During the CMP, I believe trust existed between management and employees.	211	1.66	1.00
Management and staff shared accountability and responsibility for the maintenance of NAS equipment.	205	2.27	1.31
I was empowered to make decisions that were appropriate for my position.	208	2.64	1.42
My supervisors were empowered to make decisions that were appropriate for my position.	200	2.49	1.39
My supervisors and I understood the limits of our authority to make decisions.	201	3.12	1.37
My managers and supervisors followed Agency policy and orders to ensure a safe work environment (facilities and vehicles) for employees.	199	2.65	1.38
I had access to and training in the use of required safety equipment.	187	3.29	1.27
Agency policy and orders were followed in regard to employee security and safety in remote locations.	177	2.62	1.39
Availability and reliability reporting was consistent with the actual state of NAS equipment.	180	2.42	1.40
Valid N (listwise)	147		

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
National procedures for outage reporting were consistently applied throughout the region.	171	2.56	1.36
During the CMP Pilot Program, the data entered in the DENALI system accurately reflected the amount of time incurred to maintain NAS equipment.	193	1.79	1.04
My managers listened to and gave appropriate attention to my feedback on equipment status.	180	2.39	1.34
Employees were routinely involved in decisions regarding determination of value-added and non-value-added maintenance tasks.	182	2.25	1.21
I received sufficient guidance about eliminating non-value-added maintenance tasks.	171	2.44	1.22
Revisions to maintenance schedules were logical and did not compromise the safety and efficiency of the NAS standards.	180	2.16	1.33
Most regional supplements provided clear guidance on which maintenance activities were required and how frequently they must be performed.	177	2.78	1.27
The availability and reliability of NAS equipment improved under the CMP Pilot Program.	192	2.43	1.40
AF management shared information about savings realized as a result of the CMP program with me.	206	2.36	1.33
The results of cost savings reinvestment under the CMP program were clearly communicated to me.	206	2.11	1.26
Valid N (listwise)	137		

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Management shared its methodology for selecting and prioritizing investments in facility improvements and the employee rewards program with me.	206	1.97	1.19
CMP pilot program savings were used to improve facilities and employee rewards.	195	2.48	1.43
I believe the CMP program should:	201	3.21	.91
Staffing Average Composite Score	209	2.2795	1.0964
Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	212	2.2960	.9645
Management Oversight Average Composite Score	212	2.6302	1.0292
Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score	208	2.3649	1.0814
Valid N (listwise)	183		

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your duty station?	South Alaska SMO (Anchorage)	1.93	2.14	2.43	2.14
	South Alaska SMO (other than Anchorage)	1.75	1.96	2.25	1.89
	North Alaska SMO (Fairbanks)	2.64	2.41	2.86	2.51
	North Alaska SMO (other than Fairbanks)	2.08	2.04	2.35	2.17
	Regional Office	2.95	2.87	3.27	3.05

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How many years have you been in your position?	Less than 1 year	2.28	2.25	2.69	2.24
	1-5 years	2.63	2.59	2.96	2.71
	6-10 years	2.35	2.34	2.66	2.53
	11-20 years	1.90	1.99	2.29	1.92
	Over 20 years	1.90	1.94	2.30	1.90

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How long have you been with the Federal government?	1-5 years	2.62	2.66	3.08	2.64
	6-10 years	2.19	2.21	2.71	2.46
	11-20 years	2.27	2.27	2.59	2.33
	Over 20 years	2.33	2.34	2.66	2.40

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How long have you been with the Alaska region?	Less than 1 year	2.05	1.96	2.41	2.08
	1-5 years	2.55	2.54	3.03	2.65
	6-10 years	2.41	2.43	2.80	2.57
	11-20 years	2.15	2.17	2.40	2.20
	Over 20 years	2.36	2.32	2.74	2.37

| | | Staffing Average Composite Score | Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score | Management Oversight Average Composite Score | Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score |
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your level of supervisory responsibility?	None	2.15	2.17	2.53	2.22
	First Line Supervisor	3.59	3.38	3.69	3.67
	Manager	3.89	3.59	3.94	3.73

| | | Staffing Average Composite Score | Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score | Management Oversight Average Composite Score | Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score |
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your grade or pay band?		2.36	2.51	2.80	2.59
	10	2.81	2.54	3.32	2.40
	12	2.12	2.34	2.35	2.15
	13	2.06	1.97	2.31	2.06
	14	1.00	1.00	1.73	1.00
	9	2.90	2.75	2.57	2.80
	D	1.00	1.00	1.73	1.00
	E	2.60	2.75	3.50	2.40
	F	2.18	1.89	2.45	2.21
	G	2.42	2.53	3.38	2.88
	H	1.99	2.03	2.31	2.08
	I	2.37	2.31	2.73	2.40
	J	3.32	3.36	3.63	3.44
	K	3.17	2.68	3.16	2.91

		Staffing Average Composite Score	Labor & Employee Relations Average Composite Score	Management Oversight Average Composite Score	Maintenance Policies & Procedures Average Composite Score
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
What is your occupational series?	3.00	2.83	2.86	4.00	3.00
	18.00	1.30	1.19	1.71	1.80
	28.00	2.64	2.73	3.31	2.90
	301.00	3.52	3.32	3.82	3.87
	303.00	2.60	2.75	3.50	2.40
	318.00	1.00	1.00	1.73	1.00
	334.00	3.17	3.07	3.77	3.46
	341.00	1.25	1.25	1.00	1.00
	343.00	3.14	3.21	3.30	3.38
	348.00	1.17	1.50	1.91	1.89
	391.00	1.82	1.69	3.50	1.33
	534.00	3.78	3.07	3.45	3.22
	801.00	2.27	2.13	2.76	2.16
	810.00	2.39	2.02	2.51	2.06
	819.00	2.13	1.56	2.20	2.50
	855.00	1.84	1.63	2.62	1.92
	858.00	1.42	1.44	1.55	1.56
	2101.00	2.01	2.09	2.32	2.09
	2102.00	2.39	2.35	2.65	2.35
	2188.00	4.19	4.15	4.40	4.22
	4749.00	2.40	2.53	3.34	2.23

APPENDIX D—FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

This appendix provides a detailed description of the major themes identified during our conduct of focus groups with the employees, managers, and union leaders of the Alaskan Region Airway Facilities workforce. The following reflects the views as expressed by the focus groups.

A. Employee Focus Groups

Alaskan Region employees experienced the impact of the CMP pilot program differently based on their role in the organization. For example, the CMP pilot program had a greater impact on front line SSC employees performing maintenance activities than on Regional Office employees and or other technical or program support employees. Therefore, the employee focus group data was analyzed to identify consistent themes across all employees but also to determine major differences in perspectives among employee groups. We organized Employee Focus Group results into six categories: History and General Perspectives; Staffing, Labor and Employee Relations; Management Oversight; Maintenance Policies and Procedures; and the Future Transition. Although the assessment team was tasked to cover labor and employee relations in the focus groups, it is important to note that many employees associated this category with labor management relations. Consistent themes across all employees are presented first. We indicate when themes are unique to a specific employee sub-group (e.g. SSC employees versus Support employees that include staff from the Regional Office and Technical or Program Support Units).

CMP History and General Perceptions - Consistent Themes

Prior to CMP, maintenance was conducted according to National Standards and Orders. The Alaskan Region did business like everyone else in the nation. CMP was implemented under the threat that contractors would take over AF jobs. There were several positive aspects about CMP. The CMP philosophy and concepts were very good. There was more flexibility with maintenance schedules. The concept of reducing some types of maintenance was good (MSMS concept). Training was better in terms of quality, quantity, and efficiency. The AFTT was a positive addition. There were several aspects about CMP that did not work. The program was poorly implemented and poorly managed. Also, there was a general lack of communication during CMP. There was lack of specific guidance on CMP concepts, goals and priorities and thus people did not fully understand the program.

CMP History and General Perceptions - Unique Themes

SSC employees noted that there was a large and experienced workforce; however, they also had a lot of new inexperienced staff that needed training. They also believed that AF employees understood the impetus of CMP was that they had to do business better and cheaper; management wanted to do more with less. Citing what worked under the CMP pilot program, SSC employees noted the acquisition of new equipment to replace unreliable legacy systems.

The three prevalent SSC employee themes regarding what didn't work under CMP include:

- There was a loss of proficiency on complex equipment due to extended service intervals.
- Some SSC's became grossly understaffed; there was no plan for staffing.
- In some cases maintenance intervals were too long.

Support employees believed that the maintenance process was broken and there was not enough money to continue to operate the same way. The organization realized there were things that could be done better, more efficiently. Noting what worked under CMP, support employees identified the follow elements:

- Facility performance was up (reliability and availability); however this could be attributed to outage reporting or improved equipment.
- The awards program was great, especially the Gotcha Cards.
- There was more flexibility with budgets and there was significant cost avoidance in areas such as travel and overtime.

For elements that did not work under CMP, support employees noted that not everyone bought into CMP especially in the field. There was also lack of "buy-in" from first line supervisors and division managers. Managers and supervisors were not receptive to negative feedback about CMP and did little to change what did not work under CMP.

Staffing – Consistent Themes

The reluctance to back-fill during CMP combined with the hiring freeze really hurt field operations.

Staffing – Unique Themes

SSC employees believed that the technicians took the heaviest staffing cuts. The staffing reductions contributed to a greater number of outages that were longer in duration. Accordingly, technician workload is increasing and there are fewer technicians who are fully certified. This situation puts the workload burden on those individuals who have multiple certifications, particularly travel burden. SSC employees noted that it is very difficult to replace technicians and it takes years to train someone and bring them up to speed. Due to decreased staffing and increased workload there is not enough time to give new people on the job training (OJT). Many first line supervisors were replaced and many decided to retire during CMP. In a similar vein, support employees noted that some field staff members were constantly overworked, especially in the summer season.

Labor and Employee Relations – Consistent Themes

Relations between labor and management are very poor now. Considerable tension continues to exist. The labor/management relationship was strong when the CMP started.

However the relationship deteriorated as the CMP pilot program progressed. Personal feelings and relationships seemed to cause the poor union/management relationship. Both sides (union and management) had their own agendas. Both sides were looking to see how they could benefit from what was going on.

Labor and Employee Relations – Unique Themes

SSC employees were afraid of retaliation because many people lost their jobs during CMP. Employees were threatened with disciplinary actions if they didn't go along with CMP. Management did not listen to employee feedback regarding CMP. Management stopped inviting the unions to their meetings. In order to improve the labor and employee relationship, all leaders need to be replaced and the Alaskan Region Airway Facilities organization needs to start from scratch.

Support employees believe that Union representatives are not communicating with all employees they represent. Support employees also believe that it is essential to have leaders (both union and management) who are willing to work with each other in order to improve the labor and employee relationship environment.

Management Oversight – Consistent Themes

The prevalent theme across all employee focus groups concerning management oversight was that the CMP pilot program provided their organizations with no real empowerment. In fact, employees encountered significant micro-management during the program.

Management Oversight – Unique Themes

SSC employees believed that there was more opportunity for empowerment under the pre-CMP self managed team concept. Also, managers and supervisors did not effectively communicate with front line employees. SSC employees received little specific direction or guidance about CMP, which, in turn lowered their morale. SSC employees experienced a significant amount of supervisory turnover and often saw the appointment of temporary managers during CMP. In many cases new leadership was not technically capable of making decisions. Placement in leadership positions was predicated on an individual's support of the CMP pilot program rather than their specific technical and managerial skills.

According to most support employees, management did not readily accept negative feedback on CMP. Several inexperienced supervisors were placed in very difficult positions/situations as a result. Support employees believed that poor management during the CMP period seemed to have more to do with bad managers and less to do with CMP. CMP was communicated well by some managers and not by others.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures – Consistent Themes

Mean time to restore has increased under CMP. A major contributing factor to increased mean time to restore was the increased travel due to the end of rotational staffing at remote sites.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures – Unique Themes

According to SSC employees, equipment outages increased during the CMP pilot program. There was also "cooking of the books" during CMP as outages were not coded properly. SSC employees believed that performance numbers were altered to put CMP in its best light. Also, there was a significant loss of proficiency during the CMP pilot program because technicians didn't work on equipment often enough. As a result, the mean time to repair equipment increased. Technicians were reprimanded for going to sites more often than the MSMS dictated. They were told not to touch equipment unless it was broken. However, many technicians worked on facilities despite such direction to ensure the availability of their assigned equipment.

SSC employees also believed that some changes on maintenance intervals were good, but many did not make sense. The team that developed MSMS intervals did not adequately address the differences between maintenance schedules and service certifications causing confusion and "hidden maintenance." SSC technicians would perform maintenance during periodic certification checks even though the MSMS had extended the maintenance intervals. SSC employees noted that the Rotation Program provided structure and a better work/life balance. They believed that Regional management thought that the Rotation Program was too expensive but employees believe that rotation is cheaper given the increased travel costs and overtime they now incur. Management didn't do a good job of communicating how the savings were reinvested. Employees were not sure where the money went. Some saw spending on new equipment, some did not. Also, SSC employees believed that the awards program didn't really work for field employees. Awards seemed to go to the regional employees.

Support employees noted that system performance numbers have improved however there were allegations of improper coding of outages. They also noted that maintenance on environmental equipment was poor during the CMP pilot program. The field got a lot of new equipment because money was more plentiful during CMP. Some of that money was well spent, some was not (e.g., furniture). There was a lot of spending on facilities and equipment and management put savings realized as a part of CMP back into the system. Support employees also believed that part of the savings realized from CMP went into the awards program.

Future Transition – Consistent Themes

Employees across the workforce believed that an independent third party is needed to monitor the situation and provide mediation. Most employees don't like the idea of going all the way back to pre-CMP. They believe a compromise is needed. Communication, information dissemination, and follow-through must improve considerably in order to have a successful transition. Management must listen to the workforce and respond to feedback. There needs to be more cooperation between management and workforce. There needs to be a focus on the current National Standards. All parties will have to make a lot of compromises. There are not enough technicians on board to go back to the national standards and current management won't let the organization go back to the old way of doing business.

Future Transition – Unique Themes

SSC employees stated that they need supervisors and managers with relevant experience. "first line supervisors need to be at least as technically proficient as those they supervise." Those in the SSCs also believe that while there needs to be an increase in staffing and more certified staff in field, it is not necessary to return to pre-CMP staffing levels. Since the conclusion of the CMP pilot program there is no incentive to obtain certification on new equipment as it will result in more time on the road. SSC employees also believe that AAF-1 and Regional Managers need to stop giving in to the unions. "If you're going to be leaders then lead! Give us adequate funding & staffing and let us get to work." SSC employees are reluctant to provide input to the LMT transition team because of a lingering fear of retaliation. Also, staffing shortfalls have increased employee work pace to the point where they are too busy to actively participate in transition planning.

Support employees believe that the region needs to take the best of the old system (national standards), the best of CMP pilot program, and move forward - not backward. Also, they stressed that management needs to get buy-in on the transition plan from all employees.

B. Union Leadership Focus Groups

The assessment team invited local union leaders from both the PASS and NATCA-E organizations to participate in focus groups conducted in the Alaskan Region in order to obtain the most representative sample of AF workforce perceptions and experiences during the CMP pilot program. NATCA-E and PASS represent different employee populations in the Alaskan Region. Accordingly, we found that the unions have some consistent perceptions about the CMP but also many unique perspectives. We held a separate focus group for each union's local leaders using the same protocol and discussion categories as for AF employee focus groups. The results of these sessions are presented below.

CMP History and General Perceptions - Consistent Themes

Representatives from both unions noted that, prior to CMP, maintenance was conducted according to National Standards and Orders. The Alaskan Region did business like everyone else in the nation. Also there was a sense of pride and ownership before CMP. There were several aspects about CMP that did not work. Implementation was poor. Feedback and questions were not received or responded to well. Communication between management and the workforce dwindled over the course of the CMP pilot program.

CMP History and General Perceptions - Unique Themes

PASS leaders stated that nothing really worked in the CMP except that it increased union membership. The program tried to show a profit at the cost of safety. Facility Improvement Teams (FITs) required technicians to do too many tasks when performing facility upgrades. They also noted that the CMP pilot program did not provide checks and balances or oversight. This group also voiced their personal dissatisfaction with AAL-400.

NACTA-E leaders noted that people who supported CMP moved up in the organization. They stated that some of the new maintenance schedules, the focus on efficiency, and budget flexibility during CMP were positive. Elements of CMP that NATCA-E leaders believed did not work included the fact that certain maintenance schedules were not appropriate and the short time frame for the program forced management to rush to implement without proper preparation.

Staffing - Consistent Themes

Leaders from both unions agreed that there is not enough AF staff in the Alaska Region to do the work. Management was slow to recognize the staffing shortages and then the hiring freeze hit.

Staffing - Unique Themes

PASS leaders said that a lot of the required maintenance work was not getting done. They believed that many technicians were working a significant amount of overtime and it was seriously affecting peoples' personal lives. Also, FIT teams needed training in project management leadership and that they were being asked to do jobs for which they did not have the proper skills.

NATCA-E leaders stated that contractors are now doing the work that the Alaskan Region is not staffed to accomplish. They also believed that travel costs increased during CMP due to the discontinuation of the Rotation Program. NATCA-E leaders felt that field supervisors were receiving needed training but regional supervisors were not. They believed that the AF Division was trying to make mechanical technicians electronics

gurus but did not provide them with the cross training that is necessary. Also, many first line supervisors were replaced and many decided to retire during the CMP pilot program.

Labor and Employee Relations – Consistent Themes

Leaders from both unions believe that the labor-management relationship is broken. There is no trust. They also believe that the former PASS representative (the one in place at the inception of the CMP pilot program) did whatever management wanted, was quickly promoted, and then exercised his return rights.

Labor and Employee Relations – Unique Themes

PASS leaders stated that there was no communication or feedback between regional management and the workforce. The Regional Division Manager's idea of partnership with the unions was one-way. Prior to the CMP pilot program, there was a good relationship between first line managers and technicians.

NATCA-E leaders stated that they preferred to conduct interactions with regional management via written agreements and management preferred a more informal relationship. They noted that management should not take the full 20 days to respond to a grievance. Under management's current operating procedure, resolution of grievances takes too long.

Management Oversight – Consistent Themes

Leaders from both unions believed that, prior to CMP, the organization had informed managers. During the CMP pilot program, managers who did not agree with CMP were "gotten rid of" or moved. The new managers do not have the skills to effectively lead their organizations.

Management Oversight – Unique Themes

PASS leaders believed that, while empowerment of the workforce was a primary goal of the CMP pilot program, its implementation never came to fruition. The purpose and limits of employee empowerment were not communicated to the workforce. Also, management stopped listening to feedback. NATCA-E leaders noted that the high level of micro-management countered the idea of empowerment.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures – Consistent Themes

Union representatives believe the increased performance figures and reduced outage reports were skewed or altered. They believed that the region managers redefined and manipulated outage criteria to put the CMP pilot program in its best light.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures – Unique Themes

PASS leaders stated that the maintenance guidance in the "green sheets" was not clear. They believed that SSCs had difficulty getting funds for anything but FITs so they had to create "dummy" FITs to obtain necessary funds. PASS leaders do not feel money was really saved under CMP and they haven't seen where most of the savings were reinvested.

NATCA-E leaders believed that CMP worked for most types of AF maintenance in the Alaskan Region and that the MSMS was a positive initiative. They believed that there was no money for the FITs. If and when operations money came in at the end of the fiscal year, technicians were often far too busy to work on the projects they programmed. NATCA-E leaders also stated that the regional office did procure some new equipment and infrastructure items during CMP. However, they believed that the CMP awards program was inequitably implemented.

Future Transition – Consistent Themes

Leaders from both unions agreed that the Alaskan Region needs to transition to the current National Standards for maintenance. They also believed that the current regional AF management needs to be replaced. Finally, union leaders wanted to see implementation of a more comprehensive system of checks and balances during the upcoming transition to National Standards.

Future Transition – Unique Themes

PASS leaders noted that there needs to be a focus on re-building trust between management and the workforce. They also stressed that the Alaskan Region needs to hire 187 new technicians to handle the anticipated workload resulting from the transition to National Standards.

NATCA-E leaders stressed that the collective bargaining agreement tenets need to be applied in all interactions with AF management. They stated that first line supervisors should be able to make some of their own decisions and that there needs to be a revitalization of the employees in the region.

C. Management and Supervisor Focus Groups

Managers and supervisors generally saw eye-to-eye with regard to their perspectives on the CMP pilot program. In a few cases, one or the other group saw a nuance that the other group did not mention in the focus groups. When there are unique themes between managers and supervisors we highlight them.

CMP History and General Perceptions

Both managers and supervisors noted that the CMP was born out of business necessity. Airway Facilities in the Alaskan Region needed to implement a "smarter way of doing business." They had the worst performance in the nation and had to compete with the potential for contractors to take over their jobs. The CMP allowed the Alaskan Region to put resources where needed and gave the employees more control over their work. The Airway Facilities Training Team (AFTT) worked well.

CMP was a great concept but the execution was poor. The three year time limit on CMP put unrealistic pressure on the Alaskan Region to show improvement too quickly. Support for CMP from FAA Headquarters and AAF-1 was inconsistent. The feedback mechanism did not work as it was intended; management was resistant to feedback. Across the board communication was poor. Senior managers noted that the CMP concept was born out of a strong environment of employee involvement in existence prior to CMP. Supervisors believed that CMP was not implemented consistently or equitably throughout the region and the SSCs took on the heaviest burden during CMP implementation. Some problems that were attributed to CMP were actually unrelated to CMP and/or national in scope such as the national hiring freeze, the end of the 3R program, and degradation of technical proficiency.

Staffing

The staffing levels dropped during CMP and then the national hiring freeze which prevented re-staffing to an adequate level. In many cases there were not enough technicians to do the work. Managers and supervisors saw staff retire and be reassigned, but they can't say that they were necessarily forced out because they didn't agree with the CMP. Under CMP, managers and supervisors were held accountable. Supervisors stated that there was no comprehensive analysis performed to determine required staffing levels under CMP. "There was no future plan or thinking about staffing."

Labor and Employee Relations

A positive labor management relationship existed at the beginning of CMP. The current labor management relationship is very poor - "there is no trust." A degradation in communication and trust, along with changes in union leadership, were some of the reasons why the labor management relationship turned adversarial. During CMP, leadership on both sides started to reject the idea of partnership. Supervisors believed that relationships with union representatives at the SMO and SSC level are more positive than at the regional or national level.

Management Oversight

The CMP offered employees more control over their work if they chose to embrace the responsibility and accountability that came along with empowerment. The traditional way of doing business was "by the book". It was difficult for many employees to

embrace the new way of doing business. There wasn't enough done to help employees make that change. Accordingly, newer employees with little non-CMP experience were more comfortable with the new approach than older more experienced employees. However, some supervisors felt micro-managed.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures

MSMS allowed for more efficient maintenance schedules overall, but some modifications to the program are necessary. For example, maintenance intervals were too long in some cases. Availability and reliability increased under the CMP. Managers and supervisors liked having the rewards program as a recognition tool. However, they acknowledged that there was a perception of inequitable distribution of awards particularly by the field SSC employees. Cost savings were used to make much needed upgrades to equipment and facilities - savings were definitely rolled back into the infrastructure. Managers acknowledged that some employees believed management changed the codes during outages to make the CMP look better, but managers believe that is not the case. One manager asserted that "bargaining unit employees input the data and we couldn't change the reports if we wanted to."

Future Transition

Both managers and supervisors stated that it would be difficult to go back to the old way of doing business. Also, new employees don't know what it was like before CMP. There is currently not enough staff in the Alaskan Region to perform maintenance as called for by National Standards. For some types of equipment in the region, it really doesn't make sense to return to National Standards. Managers believed that more time (more than 3-5 years) was needed under the CMP to see real change in the organization. It takes more than three years for any major organizational change to be successful. There are several parts of the CMP that were successful and should be kept, such as:

- AFTT,
- Awards program,
- Flexibility in maintenance schedules, and
- Flexibility with budgets.

To move forward, labor and management will need to focus on the core business issues rather than personal attacks and agendas. Supervisors also noted that some parts of the CMP business approach should be retained such as encouragement of employee innovation, initiative, involvement, and business ownership.

APPENDIX E— LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAL	Alaskan Region
ACM	NAS Configuration Management and Evaluation Staff
AF	Airway Facilities Service
AFSS	Automated Flight Service Station
AFTT	Airway Facilities Training Team
AML	FAA Logistics Center
ANI	National Airspace System Implementation Program
ANICS	Alaskan NAS Inter-facility Communications System
ANM	Northwest Mountain Region
AT	Air Traffic
DENALI	Data Entry and Analysis of Labor Information System
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FIT	Facility Improvement Team
FLRA	Federal Labor Relations Authority
LMR	Labor Management Relations
LMT	Labor Management Team
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMS	Modified System Maintenance Schedule
NAS	National Airspace System
NA SMO	North System Management Office

NATCA-E   National Air Traffic Controllers Association-Engineers Union

PASS   Professional Airways System Specialists Union

PCB&T   Personnel Compensation Benefits and Travel

SA SMO   South System Management Office

SMO   System Management Office

SSC   System Service Center

3R   Return Restoration and Re-employment